

In The Claims:

Please amend the claims as follows.

1. (As Filed) A ratcheting tool comprising:

a handle;

a head extending from the handle and having a first compartment, a second compartment that opens to the first compartment, and a third compartment that opens to the second compartment;

a gear ring rotatably disposed in the first compartment and defining a plurality of first teeth about an outer circumference thereof;

a pawl disposed in the second compartment and having

a front side that faces the first teeth of the gear ring and that has a plurality of second teeth, and

a back side facing away from the gear ring,

wherein the pawl is movable within the second compartment between a first position in which the first teeth and second teeth are engaged on one side of the second compartment and a second position in which the first teeth are engaged on an opposite side of the second compartment;

a housing disposed in the third compartment;

a spring received by the housing and in biasing engagement with the back side of the pawl so that the spring biases the second teeth of the pawl into meshing engagement with the first teeth of the gear ring when the pawl is in either the first position or the second position and so that the pawl is movable against the bias of the spring when the handle is rotated in a ratcheting direction with respect to the gear ring; and

a lever having

a hand actuatable outer portion and

an inner portion extending into the head in driving engagement with the pawl,

wherein the lever is disposed movably with respect to the head and with respect to the housing so that a movement of the hand actuatable portion with

respect to the head and the housing moves the inner portion to drive the pawl from one of the first position and the second position toward the other of the first position and the second position against the bias of the spring.

2. (As Filed) The ratcheting tool as in claim 1, wherein the housing is disposed in a fixed position with respect to the head.
3. (As Filed) The ratcheting tool as in claim 1, wherein the lever is disposed rotatably in the head.
4. (As Filed) The ratcheting tool as in claim 3, wherein the head defines a hole that opens to the second compartment, and wherein the lever is rotatably disposed in the hole.
5. (As Filed) The ratcheting tool as in claim 3, wherein the inner portion of the lever includes a pin that extends between opposing surfaces of the pawl so that a rotation of the lever causes the pin to engage one of the opposing surfaces to thereby drive the pawl from one of the first position and the second position toward the other of the first position and the second position.
6. (As Filed) The ratcheting tool as in claim 1, including a pin received by the housing between the spring and the back side of the pawl so that the spring biases the pawl through the pin.
7. (As Filed) The ratcheting tool as in claim 1, wherein the back side of the pawl defines two grooves separated by a ridge, and wherein the spring biasingly engages one of the grooves when the pawl is in the first position and biasingly engages the other of the grooves when the pawl is in the second position.
8. (Amended) A ratcheting tool comprising:
 - a handle;
 - a head extending from the handle and having a first compartment, a second compartment that opens to the first compartment, and a third compartment that opens to the second compartment;
 - a gear ring rotatably disposed in the first compartment and defining a plurality of first teeth about an outer circumference thereof;
 - a pawl disposed in the second compartment and having
 - a front side that faces the first teeth of the gear ring and that has a plurality of second teeth, and

a back side facing away from the gear ring,

wherein the pawl is slidable within the second compartment between a first position in which the pawl is wedged between the gear ring and a first side surface of the second compartment and a second position in which the pawl is wedged between the gear ring and a second side surface of the second compartment;

a housing disposed in the third compartment;

a first spring received by the housing and in biasing engagement with the back side of the pawl so that the first spring biases the second teeth of the pawl into meshing engagement with the first teeth of the gear ring when the pawl is in either the first position or the second position and so that the pawl is movable against the bias of the first spring when the handle is rotated in a ratcheting direction with respect to the gear ring; and

a lever having

a hand actuatable outer portion and

an inner portion extending into the head in driving engagement with the pawl,

wherein the lever is disposed in the head movably with respect to the head and with respect to the housing so that a movement of the hand actuatable portion with respect to the head and the housing moves the inner portion to drive the pawl from one of the first position and the second position toward the other of the first position and the second position against the bias of the first spring.

9. (As Filed) The ratcheting tool as in claim 8, wherein the housing is disposed in a fixed position with respect to the head.
10. (As Filed) The ratcheting tool as in claim 8, wherein the lever is disposed rotatably in the head.
11. (As Filed) The ratcheting tool as in claim 10, wherein the head defines a hole that opens to the second compartment, and wherein the lever is rotatably disposed in the hole.

12. (As Filed) The ratcheting tool as in claim 10, wherein the housing defines an arcuate groove on a surface thereof that faces the lever, and wherein the inner portion of the lever includes a first pin that is received in the arcuate groove so that the arcuate groove limits rotation of the lever with respect to the housing.
13. (As Filed) The ratcheting tool as in claim 12, wherein the inner portion of the lever includes a second pin that extends between opposing surfaces of the pawl so that a rotation of the lever causes the second pin to engage one of the opposing surfaces to thereby drive the pawl from one of the first position and the second position toward the other of the first position and the second position.
14. (Amended) The ratcheting tool as in claim 8, including a pin received by the housing between the first spring and the back side of the pawl so that the first spring biases the pawl through the pin.
15. (Amended) The ratcheting tool as in claim 8, wherein the back side of the pawl defines two grooves separated by a ridge, and wherein the first spring biasingly engages one of the grooves when the pawl is in the first position and biasingly engages the other of the grooves when the pawl is in the second position.
16. (Amended) The ratcheting tool as in claim 8, wherein ~~the~~ a surface of the housing that faces the lever defines at least one bore in which a second spring is disposed in engagement with the lever so that the second spring biases the lever against the head.
17. (As Filed) The ratcheting tool as in claim 8, wherein an inner circumference of the gear ring defines a plurality of equiangularly spaced keys.
18. (As Filed) The ratcheting tool as in claim 17, further comprising a tool receivable within the gear ring so that the gear ring applies torque from the handle to the tool through the gear ring, wherein the tool has a tool head and a post attached to the tool head, and wherein an outer surface of the post defines a plurality of equiangularly spaced keyways that receive the keys of the gear ring to thereby hold the post rotationally with respect to the gear ring.
19. (As Filed) The ratcheting tool as in claim 18, wherein the inner circumference of the gear ring further defines a first annular groove, and wherein the outer surface of the post defines a second annular groove that aligns with the first annular groove when the

post is received by the gear ring, and further comprising a retaining ring received by the first groove and the second groove to axially retain the post in the gear ring.

20. (As Filed) The ratcheting tool as in claim 8, wherein an inner circumference of the gear ring defines at least one key, and further comprising a tool receivable within the gear ring so that the gear ring applies torque from the handle to the tool through the gear ring, wherein the tool has a tool head and a post attached to the tool head, and wherein an outer surface of the post defines at least one keyway that receives the at least one key of the gear ring to thereby hold the post rotationally with respect to the gear ring.

21. (As Filed) A ratcheting tool comprising:

- a handle;

- a head extending from the handle and having a first compartment, a second compartment that opens to the first compartment, and a third compartment that opens to the second compartment;

- a gear ring rotatably disposed in the first compartment and defining a plurality of first teeth about an outer circumference thereof;

- a pawl disposed in the second compartment and having

- a front side that faces the first teeth of the gear ring and that has a plurality of second teeth, and

- a back side facing away from the gear ring and defining two grooves separated by a ridge,

- wherein the pawl is slidable within the second compartment between a first position in which the pawl is wedged between the gear ring and a first side surface of the second compartment and a second position in which the pawl is wedged between the gear ring and a second side surface of the second compartment;

- a housing disposed in the third compartment in a fixed position with respect to the head;

- a spring received by the housing and in biasing engagement with the back side of the pawl so that the spring biases the second teeth of the pawl into meshing engagement with the first teeth of the gear ring when the pawl is in

either the first position or the second position and so that the pawl is movable against the bias of the spring when the handle is rotated in a ratcheting direction with respect to the gear ring, wherein the spring biasingly engages one of the grooves when the pawl is in the first position and biasingly engages the other of the grooves when the pawl is in the second position; and

a lever having

a hand actuatable outer portion and

an inner portion extending into the head in driving engagement with the pawl,

wherein the lever is disposed in the head rotatably with respect to the head and with respect to the housing so that a rotation of the hand actuatable portion with respect to the head and the housing rotates the inner portion to drive the pawl from one of the first position and the second position toward the other of the first position and the second position against the bias of the spring.

22. (As Filed) The ratcheting tool as in claim 21, including a pin received by the housing between the spring and the back side of the pawl so that the spring biases the pawl through the pin.

23. (Previously Amended) A work piece for use with a ratcheting tool, said work piece comprising:

a. a tool end; and

b. a post end having a groove defined by a first frustoconical side and a second frustoconical side that intersect at an apex,

said first frustoconical side defining a first angle with respect to a plane intersecting said apex and being perpendicular to a longitudinal axis of said work piece,

said second frustoconical side defining a second angle with respect to said plane, wherein one of said first angle and said second angle is smaller than the other of said first angle and said second angle.

24. (Previously Amended) The work piece as in claim 23, wherein said first angle is 30 degrees.

25. (Previously Amended) The work piece as in claim 23, wherein said second angle is 60 degrees.
26. (Previously Amended) The work piece as in claim 23, said post end further comprising at least one keyway defined on an outer circumference thereof.
27. (Previously Amended) The work piece as in claim 23, said tool end defining an axial bore therein, wherein said axial bore is polygonally shaped.
28. (Previously Amended) The work piece as in claim 23, wherein said tool end is a screw driver.
29. (Previously Amended) The work piece as in claim 23, wherein said tool end is polygonally shaped.
30. (Previously Amended) The work piece as in claim 26, said post further comprising a plurality of keyways on said outer circumference.
31. (Previously Amended) The work piece as in claim 30, wherein said keyways are equiangularly spaced about said outer circumference.
32. (Previously Amended) A rotary tool comprising:
 - a. a handle;
 - b. a head extending from said handle;
 - c. a gear ring rotatably disposed in said head and defining a plurality of first teeth about an outer circumference thereof;
 - d. a pawl disposed in said head and having a plurality of second teeth in operative engagement with said first teeth; and
 - e. a work piece having
 - a tool end; and
 - a post end having a first groove defined by a first frustoconical side and a second frustoconical side that intersect at an apex,
 - said first frustoconical side defining a first angle with respect to a plane intersecting said apex and being perpendicular to a longitudinal axis of said work piece,
 - said second frustoconical side defining a second angle with respect to said plane,

wherein one of said first angle and said second angle is smaller than the other of said first angle and said second angle.

33. (Previously Amended) The rotary tool of claim 32, said gear ring further comprising
 - a. an axial bore formed therein;
 - b. a second groove formed on a circumference of said axial bore; and
 - c. a detent received in said second groove.
34. (Previously Amended) The rotary tool of claim 33, wherein said detent is a spring ring.
35. (Previously Amended) The rotary tool of claim 33, wherein said detent is a C-ring.
36. (Previously Amended) The rotary tool of claim 33, wherein when said work piece is inserted into said gear ring axial bore so that said first groove aligns with said second groove, said detent releasably secures said work piece in a first direction and axially blocks said work piece from moving in an axially second direction.
37. (Previously Amended) The rotary tool of claim 36, wherein said first angle is 30 degrees and said second angle is 60 degrees.
38. (Previously Amended) The rotary tool of claim 33, further comprising:
 - a. at least one keyway defined on one of an outer circumference of said work piece and said circumference of said gear ring axial bore; and
 - b. at least one key formed on the other of said outer circumference and said circumference of said gear ring axial bore,wherein said at least one keyway aligns with and receives said at least one key.
39. (Previously Amended) The rotary tool of claim 32, further comprising:
 - a. a housing disposed in said head;
 - b. a spring received by said housing and in biasing engagement with said pawl so that said spring biases said second plurality of teeth into meshing engagement with said first plurality of teeth so that said pawl is movable against said bias of said spring when said handle is rotated in a ratcheting direction with respect to said gear ring; and
 - c. a lever having
 - a hand actuatable outer portion, and
 - an inner portion extending into said head in driving engagement with said pawl.

40. (Previously Amended) The rotary tool of claim 39, wherein said lever is disposed movably with respect to said head and with respect to said housing so that a movement of said hand actuatable portion with respect to said head and said housing moves said lever inner portion to drive said pawl against said spring bias.
41. (Previously Amended) The rotary tool of claim 39, wherein said housing is disposed in a fixed position with respect to said head.
42. (Previously Amended) The rotary tool of claim 39, wherein said lever is disposed rotatably in said head.
43. (Previously Amended) The rotary tool of claim 42, wherein said lever inner portion includes a pin that extends between opposing surfaces of said pawl so that a rotation of said lever causes said pin to engage one of said opposing surfaces to thereby drive said pawl within said head.